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TWO SERMONS

PREACHED IN

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM,

BY THE

REV. ALEXANDER WATSON, A.M.

CURATE OF THE CHURCH,

ON THE

FIRST AND SECOND SUNDAYS AFTER THE EPIPHANY, 1843.

The Second Sermon refers to the disclaimer by the Rev. A. M. CAMPBELL, A.M., Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, of the charge of partisanship brought against that Society in consequence of his reply to a question put by the Rev. FRANCIS CLOSE, A.M., at a Meeting of the Society held in Cheltenham, Nov. 10, 1842. To which is added, an APPENDIX, showing the relation of the St. John's Church Fund to the Parochial Branches of the Societies aided by it.

LONDON:

JAMES BURNS, 17, PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.

W. B. HILL, 86, HIGH STREET, CHELTENHAM.

1843.

TO
THE CONGREGATION
OF
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM.

MY DEAR FLOCK,

ALTHOUGH the first of these discourses will form a part of that volume of my Sermons which is now in the press, and for copies of which so many of you are subscribers, yet a variety of circumstances has induced me thus promptly to publish them, in a cheap form, for general distribution. It is well that the calumny of false reports as to what I have stated in them should be rendered harmless with those about whose good opinion I am solicitous. I am not so ignorant of the prophetic declaration of HIM who, though "Master of the House," was called Beelzebub, as to wonder that a large portion of the clergy, having been set down as the "synagogue of Satan," the basest arts should be ascribed to them; neither can I be for a moment surprised to find that your Christian alacrity in building and supporting Schools in connexion with the Church, and your increasing sympathy with the leading Church Societies,

have provoked feelings which they ought not to have elicited ; but I confess the manner in which my desire, in establishing the Fund, (to direct attention to which these Sermons were preached,) has been perverted, is beyond my comprehension. As it becomes more known and understood, I am sure it will increase in efficiency ; and even this year will show the desirableness of each clergyman, among his own flock, exerting himself for the increase of the general fund ; especially when, as in our case, the monies are paid through the PAROCHIAL BRANCHES, where such exist.

Permit me, then, to dedicate these pages to you, from whose sincerity and affection, and willing co-operation in the Church's plans, I derive every encouragement to persevere in that path of duty, in which, by most solemn vows, I am constrained to walk ; but for treading in which I, in common with others, who owe those learned and pious men no filial allegiance, am stigmatised as the disciple of a supposed new school of theologians at Oxford ; whereas the name we own is Christian, and our surname Catholic, calling no man master on earth, but acknowledging as our Head only CHRIST the LORD in heaven.

I am,
My dear Flock,
Under the Bishop,
Your faithfully attached Pastor,

ALEXANDER WATSON.

*Feast of the Conversion
of St. Paul, 1843.*



SERMON I.

ROMANS xii. 4, 5.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

THE joyful season of Epiphany, on which we entered on Friday last, brings before us the SAVIOUR in a character different from that in which HE is presented to our view in the other Festivals of the Church. HE is now proposed to us as our SOVEREIGN KING, and as such demands our implicit homage. Neither is there anything but His Sovereignty herein unveiled; which is not the case on other festivals. On the great high day of our religion, that feast of the Nativity whose joyous sounds yet linger on the christian ear, we stood in adoring wonder at the astounding mercy which prompted the Eternal WORD to become incarnate for our sakes; to *humble HIMSELF* for us the sons of men. At Easter the thought that "HE is risen,—HE is not here," is associated with the recollection that the LORD of Life has been the tenant of the tomb. When we by faith gaze up into the heavens and see the SON of Man ascending up where HE was before, we recollect that, "for us men and our salvation," HE had first to *come down* from heaven. But in His Epiphany or Manifestation to the Gentiles we are absorbed with the one idea of His Sovereignty, and to HIM as a KING we come after the pattern of adoring shepherds and

worshipping Magi to offer HIM our homage! The inquiry of the wise men, was "Where is HE that is born KING of *the Jews?*" and lo HE is manifested to them as *their* king, and, as the first-fruits of the Gentiles, would they offer HIM gold and frankincense and myrrh: gold as to a KING, frankincense as to a God, and myrrh as to One who is to die for the sins of all. Nor were these separate gifts offered separately, by separate individuals; but each offered all three, thus proclaiming in the heavenly babe before them the King—the God—the Man. And, brethren, let us not think that the Gentiles are no longer concerned with approaching the manifested CHRIST with gold and frankincense and myrrh. HE is still our KING and still demands our homage,—HE is still our GOD, and still therefore requires our worship. His Sacrifice, though completed and "offered once for all," has still to be applied, and, as the condition of being saved by the cross is our bearing it, we must bring myrrh in that we mortify the flesh.

One crying evil among people who yet are not without thought in the matter of religion, is, that the different circumstances recorded in the Gospel are treated as if they were only intended to excite our admiration, or to elicit a temporary approval from our consciences: they are viewed too much as provocatives to the exercise of mere sentiment, and too little as stirring examples, inviting our zealous imitation. Thus Epiphany comes and goes, and the conduct of the worshipping Magi has, it may be, many admirers, but how few followers! And yet, brethren, we should remember that we are still called upon to emulate those who brought to the new-born SAVIOUR three-fold gifts. HE is no longer visibly manifest in the flesh; *we*, in the language of Friday's Collect, "know HIM now by Faith;" but if so be that we really know HIM, albeit but by Faith, we shall testify of our knowledge in our gifts. We shall bring HIM myrrh, as I have said, in the mortification of the lusts of the flesh by an abstinence even from things lawful, and by otherwise

following St. Paul, who declared of himself that he was “crucified with CHRIST.” We shall bring HIM frankincense, in the frequency and urgency of our prayers ascending as sweet savour before the throne of God, having adopted as our own the language of the Psalmist, “Let my prayer be set forth in Thy sight as the incense.” And lastly, we shall bring of our gold, both literally and figuratively. Figuratively, we shall offer HIM gold by shining in His sight with the light of wisdom, for, as Solomon saith, “A treasure to be desired is in the mouth of the wise.” If, then, our speech be always with grace seasoned with salt, we shall offer figuratively of our gold; but this is a gift which we must also make literally. We must offer to our King, MESSIAH, of our gold in kind acts to His poor, and in large sacrifices for the advancement of His kingdom among men. He has promised to acknowledge as done unto HIMSELF all those good offices which we from love to HIM do to the brethren, and therefore it is that this seems an appropriate season to remind you of some of the many ways in which you may find favour in His sight, by offering to HIM those gifts by which you acknowledge Him as your King—your offerings of gold—your dedication, that is, of your services and your wealth to HIM.

And first, let us from the text learn how it is that kind offices done to the brethren are gifts which the Saviour will acknowledge as offered unto HIM, MESSIAH our Prince. The Apostle, using the analogy of the human frame possessing a distinctive unity, though made up of many members, each different in form and use from the other, alleges, “So we, being many, are one Body in CHRIST, and every one members one of another.” And his meaning in this assertion is to be gathered from another of his Epistles, in which he speaks of CHRIST as HIM whom the Father has given to be “Head over all things to the Church, which is His Body, the fulness of HIM that filleth all in all.” Hence, therefore, we learn that kind offices, whether of service or of wealth done in, and to, and through the Church, are, inasmuch as they are done in, and to, and

through the Body of CHRIST, acknowledged by HIM who is Head over all things to the Church; and thus we arrive at the conclusion that, would we keep a true Epiphany and offer to our KING, who is seated high upon a throne, above all principalities and powers, and whom, therefore, we now know only by faith; that would we offer to our Invisible KING, our real and substantial gifts, bringing to HIM the homage of our gold, we must employ our time or our wealth, or both, in the service of the Church, in her varied solicitude for the temporal and spiritual wants of her children.

The Church, which is CHRIST's Body mystical, is the proper channel of our gifts: one member of the body must not act without regard to the others, and so one Christian must not act irrespectively of another; though many, we are but one Body; one Body no less than one SPIRIT with CHRIST; and we are all members one of another. *As a BODY, then, let us act:* let it not be that we disregard our high gift of union with the Incarnate CHRIST, but in that we are in HIM by belonging to His Body, the Church; let it be ever uppermost in our minds that we may not, except at our peril, dispense with the Church as a Divinely-appointed almoner of our gifts.

When our Incarnate God had uttered the piercing cry of willing suffering, "It is finished," and when the FATHER had put the seal to the SON's words by His rising again on the third day, HE might, had it so pleased HIM, have not only wrought a completed work of redemption, but of sanctification also; and so have rendered all human agency in the extension of his kingdom unnecessary. But HE who is infinite Wisdom no less than infinite Mercy, did not so will it. He has so settled the foundations on which His kingdom is to be reared, that nothing can be added to their completeness or their perfectness; but the Temple of His Grace is still to rise upon the "foundation stone laid in Zion, elect and precious." The Lord JESUS CHRIST has "suffered death upon the cross for our redemption, and has made there by His one oblation of HIMSELF, once

offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world."

But, in order that men may participate in the salvation thus placed within their reach, the Author of that salvation has, in the language of the Epistle for the Epiphany, so ordered it, that His manifold wisdom is made known by the Church, and HE has made the full application of His Atonement to be ordinarily contingent upon the proclamation of His Gospel and the administration of His Holy Sacraments. And from the very nature of the case, HE has committed the handing on of this message, and the celebration of these ordinances, to a particular order of men, to whom HE has vouchsafed the promise of a never-failing succession, in virtue of His ever-abiding Presence. I say by the nature of the case, for, if men are to be saved to the end of the world, the Gospel must be preached and the Sacraments administered *to the end, by men in perpetual succession* from those HE first sent. This order of men are the Bishops and Priests of His Church assisted by Deacons; and if, therefore, we would be found "fellow-workers with God," in the blessed work of benefiting our fellow-creatures, we must throw ourselves into the Church's system, act as her dutiful children, resign ourselves to her ordering, seeking the accomplishment of Divine ends by the reverent use of Divine means.

That this was the course pursued by the early followers of the Cross, we learn, not only from the exhortations to that effect, similar to our text, which abound in the Apostolical Epistles, but from the actual recorded practice of the infant Church alike in the Acts, the Epistles, and early Christian writers. St. Luke tells us, Acts iv. 37, "As many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and *laid them down at the Apostles' feet*; and so onerous was the distribution of the fund thus placed at the disposal of the Church, that "seven men of honest report, full of the HOLY GHOST and wisdom, were sought out and appointed over this

business." In the Epistles we read of the sympathy between Church and Church, and how St. Paul was "communicated with," "as concerning giving and receiving," by the *church* which was at Philippi. St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, the disciple of John the Beloved, addresses Polycarp, also a disciple of St. John, and "Bishop of the Church which is at Smyrna," and exhorts that, even in the matter of the relief of the widows, nothing be done without his episcopal sanction. "Let not the widows be neglected. Be thou after God their Guardian. Let nothing be done without thy knowledge and consent." Justin Martyr describes it to be the practice of the Church in his time, to take care of all who are in any need, by offerings made at the time of the Holy Communion, and Tertullian speaks of the common Treasury of the Church, which was dispensed by those of its rulers, whose "confession" entitled them to be almoners of its bounty.

It were well for us that our Church had never surrendered her distinctive character in this respect, but had retained within her own immediate control all operations pertaining to her office as an integral portion of the Body Mystical of the REDEEMER. Were the alms of the faithful collected on the first day of each week, and carried to a common fund to be apportioned by the Governing Body of the Church, and *had this been our continuous practice*, dissent and infidelity would not harass us at home, nor would the cries of our neglected children in the colonies be wafted from beyond the seas reproaching us with being unmindful and unnatural in our conduct towards them in things spiritual. England would be known rather for her planting of the Cross, than by the achievements of her victorious sword, or the homage paid to her Sceptre. Yes, had we but the same unity of action as a Church which we exercise and exhibit as a nation, the adversaries of our faith could not have it in their power to reproach us with the little we have done for religion at home, nor with the insignificance of our conquests as an "army of the LORD of Hosts," as compared with

the trophies which grace the courts of our earthly Sovereign.

Perhaps of all the evils which are the consequence of the silence of Convocation, (and let it not be supposed that I think there are no evils which would attend the immediate resuscitation of its power, but) of all the evils which are entailed upon us by the absence of an acting Convocation, this is not the least, that the Church is without the means of doing her full duty by those who, in the matter of making their offering of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh, to the SAVIOUR, seek to remember, that as they approach God, through CHRIST, so CHRIST is to them "The Way, the Truth, the Life," by permitting them, though enlightened in the other means of grace, to be united to HIM more especially in the Sacraments of the Church. The clear duty of Christians to offer of their gold to CHRIST in and by and through His Church I have already shown; and we will hope the day is not far distant, when the Church, acting in her corporate capacity, will be in a condition to fulfil her part as the almoner, as readily and as fully as it is binding, in their individual capacity, upon her members to offer their gifts for her dispensing. To this she will be impelled, as we hope, not more by the evils of the present system of petty societies starting into existence to gratify every whim and fancy, than by the guidance of her Great Head, vouchsafed in answer to the prayers of those who sigh for the operations of an united Church.

She has the example of her daughter Church of America to incite her, nor let her be ashamed to follow her whom it is true she ought to have led. In the year 1835, a committee was appointed by the "Board of Directors of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America," to consider and report "Whether any and what measures should be adopted for the more efficient organization of this Society, and the future conduct of its returns;" and a part of their unanimous report was, to propose that, in the place of

the mode of operation which had hitherto prevailed, “ the Church herself, in dependence upon her Divine Head, and for the promotion of His glory, undertake and carry on, in her character as the Church, and as the ‘ Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in the United States of America,’ the work of Christian Missions. The time, I repeat, is, one may hope, not very far distant, when the CHURCH, AS THE CHURCH, will show herself the real Missionary Society, whether for home or foreign purposes ; and when it will be seen and felt that this is the original constitution of Christ, and that the Apostles, and the Bishops, their successors, are His perpetual trustees. But, in the meanwhile, until the Church, by her accredited organs, takes this work entirely into her own hands, are her members to stand still and omit to make their gifts for the advancement of the Redeemer’s kingdom, or are they, on the other hand, at liberty to take up with every and any plan which wears the mask of benevolence ? *The dutiful Churchman will be neither apathetic nor indiscriminate.* He will take pains to find out the greatest measure of the Church’s system which is proposed to him, and upon that he will act. Where the weekly offertory is within his reach, he will, in obedience to this morning’s second lesson, to do alms in secret, prefer it to the parade of subscription lists, which pain more by the impertinence they draw down upon those who are *bold enough to master self*, and refuse to “ offer to the LORD their God that which doth cost them nothing,” than they gratify by the praise of those who calculate gifts for religious purposes by man’s rule rather than God’s. And whether he makes his gifts through the offertory, or through his clergyman, or by the means of a fund in immediate connexion with the flock to which he belongs, or by direct transmission to the parties by whom he wishes them employed ; in any case, he will be careful that the means he sanctions by this cooperation, shall contain no element hostile to the constitution of the Church.

Now it is not easy for the private Christian at once

to sift the pretensions of societies which profess to be such as Churchmen may belong to, especially when, as has been for some time the case among us, societies as heterodox as the Bible Society, and the Religious Tract Society, and as dishonest and mischievous in their operation as the so-called *Church* Pastoral Aid Society,* number among their subscribers influential members of the Church. There are many persons who would willingly give to two or three societies, but who cannot give to all that solicit their cooperation ; and from the absence of distinctive principles having been laid down for their guidance, are perplexed in making a selection ; and it not unfrequently happens, that the irregular society gets the money which its donor would not wittingly have given in other than the orthodox channel. It is a chief characteristic of true worth, to be unobtrusive, and to rely rather upon having its merits discovered, than choosing to make them a stalking-horse to favour ; and thus many a good society is crippled for lack of funds, while less valuable but more noisy competitors have overflowing coffers. Under these circumstances, it has always appeared to me to be the clear duty of a Clergyman to make his people aware of the existence of means, by which they can develope their sympathy and fellow-feeling for those who are one Body with them in CHRIST, and also for those who have a common stock with themselves in Adam. And in proportion as he is advising his whole flock publicly, or particular members of it individually and privately, will his advice have a general or restrained character. The all-wise CREATOR has so fashioned us, that different persons are differently affected by the wants of those around them ; and it is the object of the Church to afford scope for the exercise of all those gifts which “ differ according to the grace given ” unto their several possessors. Upon minute offices of benevolence, or as to the choice of particular modes of relief for specific maladies of soul or body, it is not the province of the clergyman to advise, except under particular circumstances,

* See Dr. Molesworth’s Letter to the Bishop of Chester.

and these generally arising out of the request of those whom he counsels. But upon the grand objects apparent in the establishment of the Church by her Divine FOUNDER, he is bound to exhort those intrusted to his charge, and to provoke them to liberal cooperation in the Church's labours. And those exertions will generally be found to be most successful which are put forth within prescribed limits ; and as all the several branches of the Church have one centre in their invisible Head, the risen and ascended CHRIST, and as a collection of dioceses have a centre in their metropolitan, and the parishes forming a diocese their centre in the bishop, so each flock has its centre in its pastor, and whatever is done jointly by a flock and its pastor, has that element of success which belongs to unity of action.

These were the convictions which led me to address to each member of this congregation, in the beginning of the past year, a printed statement,* soliciting contributions for St. John's Church Schools, and for such of the five Societies therein mentioned, as might commend themselves to the good wishes and charitable deeds of each several person. My wish was to thus afford opportunities for small gifts, and to meet the case of those who only give where they are solicited. Being absent from home at the time they were issued, misconceptions arose as to the real object of this statement, which, I venture to hope, will not arise again, and which it was not possible to meet with sufficient promptness from a distance. These papers will be issued again on Sunday next, and I do trust that you will all be kind enough to spare half an hour for their perusal ; and if, in any particular, they are not sufficiently explicit, I cheerfully hold myself in readiness to offer any explanations which may be sought. My simple object was and is to promote, in what appears to myself, and to those whom I have consulted, including our diocesan—to promote, in the most desirable way, the increase of the funds of our own schools, and of five societies, which are composed

* See Appendix.

entirely of churchmen, and are under the superintendence, *ex officio*, of the Archbishops, and all the Bishops of the two provinces of the Church of England, and which, in their several spheres, seem the best calculated to carry out, in subordination to her principles, the great objects for which the Church was incorporated and chartered by our Lord.

The form in which our Lord commissioned his Apostles, stamps a missionary character upon the Church's charter: "And JESUS came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto ME in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Or, as we read it in St. Mark, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature;" and in St. Luke we read that the Saviour ordained, "That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem.*"

Now, in order to the fulfilment of this duty, the Church requires funds to supply clergy at home and abroad, and to raise these funds we have two Societies, the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts," and the "Society for Promoting the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places." Of these Societies I purpose to speak more fully next Sunday, on which day the papers will be again issued. I mention the Additional Curates' Fund Society, because I believe its intrinsic excellence and its *urgent wants* are comparatively little known; and with regard to the Society for Propagating the Gospel, I wish to put you in possession of a disclaimer I have received from the Secretary, the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of the impression to which a statement of his at the last parochial meeting in this place naturally gave rise—a disclaimer which will be satisfactory to those who consider the Society's character compromised by the party spirit

recently attributed to her, of rejecting from her service a large and zealous body of the clergy of the Church.

Passing, then, on from the increase of the clergy at home, and in our colonies, and our heathen dependencies, we come to that indispensable handmaid of the Church, the School. The diligent care of the early Church to catechise her youth, is well known ; and daily experience offers every inducement to acquiesce in the counsel which, if human, would be wise, and which, since it is Divine, must be implicitly obeyed, to “train up, (or catechise, see margin,) a child in the way he should go ;” and to “bring up our youth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ;” and to follow the example of Eunice and Lois, who took care that, from a child, Timothy should know the Holy Scriptures ; or of pious Hannah, who, from the first, lent Samuel to the Lord ; or still more of our Lord himself, who, as you have heard in the second lesson, lingered behind in the catechetical school of the Jewish doctors. And most valuable is the assistance rendered by the NATIONAL SOCIETY to the Church at large in this particular, by grants of money, by systematising the best education, and training efficient masters ; while of the value of our own particular schools, I trust I may safely hope that your opinion is not less favourable than is indicated by the eulogy of the many strangers by whom they have been visited. Your readiness abundantly to support these schools in the past year will, I doubt not, be only exceeded by what you will do this ; and, therefore, I would only further say in connexion with this subject, that, but for the National Society, an education without religion would have been established as national, and the clergy bearded in their own schools by inspectors amenable to no ecclesiastical authority.

As through the instrumentality of Clergy and Schools, the living Church is gathered, they naturally look for a material temple where they may enshrine JEHOVAH's Name ; and in which, as His earthly Palace, they may do their homage to the KING of Kings, and where,

because His Name is set, "He will be attent unto their prayer, and come and bless them;" and here the Society for Promoting the Enlargement, Building, and Repairing of Churches and Chapels, and the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Church Building Association, come 'n and hold out inducement and cooperation to Clergy and People to erect temples of the LORD, habitations for the mighty God of Christians, which shall be Houses of Prayer for all people.

Again we find, that as infallibly inspired teachers were withdrawn from the Church, it was considered unwise to trust to oral teaching for the guidance of those to whom was committed the conversion of sinners, and the edification of the faithful, as had been the case until after the year A.D. 100; about which time John, the last of the inspired line, died; and soon after which the Gospels, and Epistles, and Apocalypse, were gathered into Canon. And as now the living Teacher, unlike the Teachers of the Apostolical age, is not in a condition to prove the truth of his teaching, from his being able to say "which our eyes have seen, and our ears have heard," but must appeal for his proof to Scripture, therefore it becomes desirable to multiply copies of the Bible to be circulated by the Clergy among the people; and to assist the Church herein we have The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which supplies Churches, Schools, Parish Libraries and the Poor, both at home and abroad, with Bibles, Prayer-books, Testaments, and Psalters, and Books and Tracts of instruction and amusement, at prices considerably below prime cost, making gratuitous grants where necessary.

And now, brethren, what remains to be added to a discourse unwittingly extended beyond its accustomed length; but that, having heard, in addition to what has been said, what will be urged in behalf of two of the Societies on Sunday next, you will receive the Printed Papers to which I have alluded, in a fair and candid spirit, giving to one or two, or three, or all, or *none*, of the objects proposed to you, and in the proportion severally which a consideration of their

claims and your duty at this joyous season of Epiphany, may, under the HOLY SPIRIT's guidance, suggest to your several consciences. And, let me further hope that you will be found a willing-hearted people, refusing to let the houses of your God lie waste while ye dwell in ceiled homes, refusing to let the cry of spiritual destitution rise up into the ear of offended HEAVEN inviting wrath upon our beloved motherland, but resolving to pour out before HIM, whether you have little or much, the treasures which His goodness lends, and imploring HIM to accept them here, that you may find them hereafter in heaven ! We are again bidden guests to the marriage supper of the LAMB ; let us attune our hearts for the Holy Feast, by fervently wishing that GOD would put it into all our minds to give ourselves up to HIMSELF. " Oh that GOD would put into the hearts of the Churchmen of this land so far to imitate their brethren in the Church of Macedonia, as to be willing according to their power ! The superfluity of millions that now rust, or are abused to frivolous or sinful uses, would supply with spiritual food a famishing world. The strength of body, the gifts of mind, the weight of influence, the able hands, the generous hearts, that now content themselves with secular ends, and labour but for temporal interests, converted to the LORD, and consecrated by the live coal from His altar, would supply an army that should beleaguer every land. The noble rapture, like a flame of living fire, should spread from heart to heart. Again, the arm of the LORD should wake as in the ancient time. *Again the gates of hell should totter to their fall.*" The Church of the living GOD roused from her sleep, should shake the dust from her fair and beautiful garments, and gird on her panoply for battle. Strong in the LORD and in the power of His might, she should go on from strength to strength, until, triumphant over every foe, GOD for CHRIST's sake, bestows on her the victory.

SERMON II.

ST. MATTHEW vi. 10.

“Thy kingdom come.”

It would not be easy for the youngest among us to enumerate the many times which our lips have uttered this petition of the Divine Prayer which the REDEEMER taught His disciples, as their form of address to His and their FATHER. I say it would not be easy to enumerate the many times which our lips have uttered this prayer ; and I fear I must add, that there would be a like difficulty in satisfying ourselves how often we have realized its deep meaning in our hearts. In the former case we should be bewildered by the number of our performances ; in the latter, by the number of our omissions. That there is a wondrous force in the expression, we might be sure, from the fact that it forms a part of the LORD'S prayer, and is thus the dictate of Infinite Wisdom. Let it, then, be our concern this morning to ascertain how much is involved in this supplication, and whereunto we are committed by the offering up of such a Prayer, as the expression of our desires.

When, then, we beseech of GOD that His kingdom may come, we, as subjects of the enthroned MESSIAH

are asking that Satan's kingdom may be abolished, and the kingdom of our LORD JESUS CHRIST advanced: that God being set upon a throne, the devil may perish, sin may be destroyed, death may die, and captivity may be led captive, that we, being freed, may reign to eternal life. And thus it would appear that this kingdom is threefold, viz. of Power, of Grace, of Glory.*

1. Of Power.—For heaven is His throne and earth His footstool; and to His law, as resulting from His Will and Providence, are all beings and all things, whether in heaven or in earth, or under the earth, subject; the Lord reigneth, be the people never so impatient—the LORD sitteth between the cherubims, be the earth never so unquiet. And thus, in praying that God's kingdom of power may come, we ask that all angels, men, and creatures, may submit to his command; and that His enemies, whether men or devils, may be brought to confusion and crushed with His rod of iron: that Satan's power be destroyed, sin weakened, and offences rooted out.

2. There is also a kingdom of Grace, which our Saviour tells us is within us. The SPIRIT of God it is who is Regent here. Christ's ministers are ambassadors—the Gospel the laws—the Sacraments the seals—the discipline of the Church the rod; all tending to the extirpation of sin and the establishment of righteousness, "the sceptre of the LORD" being, in the language of the Psalmist, a "right sceptre;" and in order to this kingdom we pray, first, that the SPIRIT of God may reign in our hearts, and there exercise absolute dominion, casting down every high thought, ruling in the understanding by faith, in the will by charity, in the passions by mortification, in the whole body by obedience; secondly, that there may be in us a ready submission to His ambassadors, His laws, His discipline, and a right use of His Holy Sacraments; and thirdly, that the peace, truth, and glory of the Gospel may be published and preached throughout the whole world, making

* See Bishop Nicholson, in loc.

each day more rapid and advancing strides, extending itself where, as yet, it is not, and commanding obedience where its sway is manifested.

There yet remains a third aspect under which the Divine kingdom may be viewed—a kingdom, that is, of glory ; in which, at the second Advent of MESSIAH, the subjects of grace shall receive the glory prepared for them ; and to the accomplishment of this kingdom, it is necessary that His kingdom of grace, abounding as it does in sin and infirmity, should be translated into a more glorious image ; that the number of the elect being accomplished, the final dissolution of all things may come, that we may obtain full salvation and redemption, and enjoy the glory prepared for us ; and that the OMNIPOTENT would manifest to the world His great glory, by the final doom and destruction of all His enemies.

Such then, brethren, are the various objects contemplated in that deeply pregnant sentence, “ Thy kingdom come !” and may HE who is chief Minister in that department of the Divine dynasty, with which we are most closely concerned, be with us, as I endeavour to point out the earnestness of action and the devotedness of purpose to which we are committed by the fact that we pray to our FATHER in Heaven that His kingdom may come.

It is only indirectly that we are concerned in the first and third of those particulars in which it appears that the kingdom of God consists ; but in the second mentioned we are most deeply involved. The OMNIPOTENT exercises His power *over* us, and manifests His glory *before* us ; but His grace HE displays *in and through* us ! We are concerned as subjects in His kingdom of power, and as aspiring expectants in His kingdom of glory ; but in His kingdom of grace, we are employed as agents, even while we are acted upon as recipients. In our acknowledged inability to think a good thought, say a good word, or work a good deed in our own strength, we witness to God’s *power* ; in our humble striving after another and more perfect state, in our

cravings for a satisfaction which earth cannot yield, and a happiness which the creature cannot afford, we bear testimony that there is a glory which shall be hereafter revealed ; but we then, and then only, pay our homage as subjects of the kingdom of grace, when we evince a readiness to subjugate our individual will to the ordering of the Church, resigning ourselves to her directions, and resolving that, in so far as God shall give us strength, we will suffer no plan of hers to fail which could succeed through our cooperation.

It thus appears, that we are committed to active exertion by the fact, that we ask of God that His Kingdom should come, inasmuch as His Kingdom cannot effectually come unless mankind readily own its sway, and to the acknowledgment of His authority they are not prompted by the impulse of their proper nature; and even in the case of the regenerate there are many circumstances which call for the active sympathy of their fellows. In order that CHRIST's Kingdom may come, and as a dispensation of grace reign amongst us, our own holiness and the subjugation of the wayward wills of others is necessary. When, therefore, we pray "Thy kingdom come," we pray that ourselves may be holy, and we pray also that we may be instrumental in winning others to acknowledge the power of the SAVIOUR's sceptre. Your individual holiness is the object to which our every day teaching is directed, and our chief concern is, that in all things you may be found to be witnesses for the truth, and bearing testimony of your desire that ye may be saved ; and, therefore, at this season of Epiphany, when we offer our thankful adoration for the manifestation to the Gentiles of HIM who was "born KING of the Jews," I need none apology for seeking to interest you in the behalf of those who need your cooperation in order to their being permitted to see the dawning of that day in whose meridian splendour it is your happy privilege to be allowed to bask.

I sought on Sunday last to show you that whimsical beneficence is not necessarily true Christian Charity ;

and that he only discharges his full duty as a member of that Body in which we are all one in CHRIST, who makes self-denying gifts in and through the Church—and the principle which I then sought to enforce is embodied in this day's Epistle, "He that *giveth*, let him do it with simplicity;" and in conformity with the intimation I then gave, I come now to enforce upon you the duty of multiplying Clergy at home and abroad, in order that we may hasten, as far as may be, the accomplishment of the Prayer of our text, "Thy kingdom come!"

We cannot offer this prayer without feeling the force of our blessed LORD's declaration as recorded in Wednesday Morning's* second lesson; The harvest truly is plenteous, together with its drawback, but the labourers are few—and its counsel, "Pray ye therefore the LORD of the harvest that HE would send forth labourers into His harvest."

The harvest truly is plenteous; whether we look at home or abroad, the fact is so. At home there are thousands who have none of the Church's care, and abroad it is the same, even in a tenfold degree.

It is impossible to shut our eyes to the fact, that the language of the prophet is applicable to ourselves, and that we have tenfold reason to take up the language of our predecessors in God's heritage and ask "What nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon HIM for?" And is this gracious nearness of the MOST HIGH a subject of idle boasting? Should we not be thereby aroused to a sense of our momentous responsibilities?—ought we not to learn thence to remember, that to whom much is given of them much will be required—and that if we have abundant access unto God in prayer, we should use our privileges as the LORD's remembrancers, and never hold our peace day nor night, but cry and cease not, and give HIM no rest till HE establish, and till HE make Jerusalem a praise in the earth, till the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that

* January 11.

burneth, and the Gentiles see her righteousness and all things her glory, until, in the language of the Psalmist, "All nations whom the LORD has made shall come and worship HIM and shall glorify His Name?"

CHRIST died to ransom all mankind—He has paid the penalty which Adam incurred. The offer of His purchased salvation is without money and without price. The marts of this spiritual merchandize are within our individual reach. What, then, shall be said for us, if we are niggard in extending to others the benefits we so richly enjoy, whether those who are destitute of it are at home or abroad? We have been taught the doctrine of Christ crucified; we have learnt to see in the precious Blood which purpled the heights of Calvary, the cleansing from all sin of a world sunk in apostasy; and we know that CHRIST is no SAVIOUR for us, unless we crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof; and can we see how CHRIST loved us, and not love the brethren for whom HE died? Shall other hands have planted the stakes of our Zion, and curtailed them with the ordinances through which a Gracious COMFORTER animates and influences the heirs of glory; and shall a SAVIOUR's Providence and a mother's care have admitted us in infancy into that rich inheritance, and we stand idly by and do nothing to lengthen the cords which mark the boundaries of our home? Shall we bear in our foreheads the mark of the SAVIOUR's dying, and remember that the cross was signed upon our brows as the symbol of warfare,—that it was given us as a soldier's badge, and that we are thereby pledged to the conquest of sin, the world, and the devil,—and yet do nothing to reclaim a portion of the evil one's territory, whereon to enlarge the place of our tent? Let it not be so said of us. Nay, brethren, let us but remember that we should not be Christian but for Missionary zeal in others, and then, surely, we cannot omit to show it ourselves towards those who as yet lie in the wastes of sin. A desire to extend the knowledge of CHRIST and His Gospel to those who have it not, is the very being of the Church. The Apostles' hearts

burned with this desire, and the light by which they were enkindled, was an emanation of that Divine Love which prompted the eternal SON of GOD to leave the Bosom of His FATHER and the glories of His throne, to labour among man for his conversion. But the holy fervour was not confined to the Apostles : as CHRIST infused it into His first heralds, by sending them as His Father had sent HIM ; so they in turn inspired their successors with a like burning zeal, by sending these as HE had sent them. And thus it was that the Apostles and first Bishops of the Church went far and wide, planting the standard of the Cross, and encircling it with the cords of the Christian Church ; and in the earnestness of its first heralds, may be found some clue to the wonderful success which attended the delivery of their message. These early servants of the Crucified went far and wide, preaching CHRIST'S Gospel to the end of the world ; and how successfully, let Eusebius, the trustworthy historian of the first three centuries, inform us. Thus then, says he, " under celestial influence and co-operation, the doctrine of the SAVIOUR, like rays of the sun, quickly irradiated the whole world." They sent forth the Church in its plenitude—not a priest here and a deacon there, but the whole Church in its Divine fulness. The flock was not left without an overseer. There were early appointed Bishops to ordain elders in every city, and to set in order the things that were wanting. The Apostles journeyed *confirming* the Churches, and themselves carried the heavenly message far and wide. Again, to quote the language of Eusebius : " The holy apostles and disciples of our SAVIOUR, being scattered over the whole world, Thomas, according to tradition, received Parthia as his allotted region ; Andrew received Scythia, and John, Asia ; where, after continuing for some time, he died at Ephesus. Peter appears to have preached through Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia, to the Jews that were scattered abroad ; who also, finally coming to Rome, was crucified with his head downwards, having requested, of himself, to suffer in this way. Why

should we speak of Paul spreading the gospel of CHRIST from Jerusalem to Illyricum, and, finally, suffering martyrdom at Rome, under Nero ?”

And for the labours of this last-mentioned apostle, *we* have still more reason to be grateful ; for there is much reason to think that our own shores bore the impress of his foot—our own rocks echoed back his message. “That he did go to Britain,” says the late excellent Bishop of Salisbury, Dr. Burgess, “we may collect from the testimony of Clemens Romanus, Theodoret, and Jerome, who relate, that, after his imprisonment, he preached the gospel in the western parts ; that he brought salvation to the islands that lie in the ocean, and that, in preaching the gospel, he went to the utmost bounds of the west. What was meant by the west, and the islands that lie in the ocean, we may judge from Plutarch, Eusebius, and Nicephorus, who call the British ocean the Western ; and again, from Nicephorus, who says that one of the Apostles went to the extreme countries of the ocean, and to the British isles ; but especially from the words of Catullus, who calls Britain the utmost island of the west ; and from Theodoret, who describes the Britons as inhabiting the utmost parts of the west. When Clement, therefore, says that St. Paul went to the utmost bounds of the west, we do not conjecture, but are sure that he meant Britain, not only because Britain was so designated, but because St. Paul could not have gone to the utmost bounds of the west without going to Britain.” But even if this reasoning should seem inconclusive to any, this much is certain, that Christianity was planted here, if not by an apostle, yet by apostolic men ; and that it was to missionary zeal that our forefathers were indebted for their knowledge of the gospel. And then, when the mists of pagan darkness had overclouded the light which beams from the Mercy-seat, once more we were indebted to missionary zeal, when Gregory sent Augustin to our shores. Ours was not the land where JESUS lived and died. It was in the east that the spiritual Sun arose, and we form a portion of the west, and yet our gloom

has been penetrated by His radiance. Are we not, then, bound by every tie of gratitude, as well as impelled by every motive of duty, to put forth substantial exertions, showing our earnest wish and our sincerity in praying that CHRIST's kingdom may come?

We are incited by thankfulness, no less than called by love, to promote, by every means lawfully in our power, the extension of the REDEEMER's rule among men. It has been well said, that "The Gospel is God's *gift in* trust for the salvation and conversion of lost man"—and that "The Church is His Trustee."* In early days she was most true and faithful to her high trust; but, as time has rolled on, the stream, which should have gathered strength in its onward current, has been intercepted here, and pent up there; and now once more it seems to be gathering its strength, and preparing, as we hope, to turn with efficiency the vast wheel to which is affixed the eternal happiness of millions. Follow the Apostles from the day of Pentecost, and read in their unwearied labours to spread the Gospel through the world, how they interpreted the language of their high commission from their LORD and Master. Read in the converts which they made, in the churches which they planted, in the exulting exclamation of St. Paul, "Now, thanks be to God which causeth us to triumph, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place;" how readily, under every trial and against every obstacle, the promise of the SAVIOUR was fulfilled. And remember the trust ceased not with the apostolic age, neither, God be praised, did its exercise. It has not yet ceased—it will never cease until, from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, God's name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered unto Him and a pure offering. It shall not cease—for CHRIST, who is God, hath said it—even unto the end of the world." Run down, from its first days, the track of sacred story—"Where are the

* Bishop Doane.

green spots found which cheer the eye and fill the heart with gladness?" Are they not those in which the word of God had free course and was glorified, in which the office of an *Apostle* was discharged most fully, in its first, and literal acceptation, as a Missionary Bishop, in which the everlasting Gospel was preached with the greatest faithfulness, and men were taught to observe all things whatsoever CHRIST had commanded? "Turn to a bright and burning page in all the scroll which bears incised the history of the Church, and you shall read in it the record of the Missionary's toils—the Missionary's sufferings—the Missionary's triumphs—the glory which illumines it, the manifestation of the truth as it is in Jesus—kindling the hearts of men with love, and making their lives radiant with purity and piety. Or again, spread out the map before you. Scan with inquiring eye the pictured surface of its mimic world. Which are the spots which fix attention most, and fire the thought with fullest rapture? Not the scenes where Alexander or the great first Cæsar strove to win the throne of universal empire—not the traces of imperial grandeur, nor the trophies of triumphant art—but Bethlehem, where lay the manger-cradled babe—Calvary, which tells of the fearful cost—and Olivet, which proclaims the successful issue, of the mission of the Son of God, and the cities where St. Paul preached." Or, to come to later times, who in this part of England can, in the recollection of Fuller's quaint sentence, narrating the event, forget the stream which wafted Wiclif's ashes to the sea? Popish tyranny caused the remains of this great man to be exhumed after they had been buried upwards of forty years. What was still there was burnt to ashes and cast into the Swift, a neighbouring brook running hard by. Upon which Fuller remarks, "Thus this brook has conveyed his ashes into Avon—Avon into Severn—Severn into the narrow seas—then into the main ocean, and thus the ashes of Wiclif are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."

Need I say more to commend to your hearts and to

your consciences the sacred duty of missionary exertion—the sacred privilege of carrying the Gospel to distant lands? And oh! where is our Christian sympathy, where our national patriotism, if, throughout the vast masses of our home population, and the wide range of our colonial dependencies, we are suffering those who should be the effective pioneers of civilisation and of the Church, to languish in sorrow for the want of spiritual light and spiritual consolation?

Is there in all this congregation a single heart which does not glow with zeal, that everywhere, at home and abroad, the Gospel may be possessed in the purity in which we now enjoy it? I will not believe so meanly of any one here. I forbear to point to all the scenes which invite your sympathy, on the ground of your moral obligation, or I might point you at home to the district in which I passed my diaconate, and the first year of my priesthood; a district containing forty thousand souls, and, until lately, but one church. In that district, until the Additional Curates' Fund supplied the stipend by which I was paid, there was but one clergyman to tend these thousands; and a cursory attention to the Report of the invaluable Society just named, will show that instances hardly less urgent abound. Abroad I might carry you to the Canadas, where a worldly blessing has attended spiritual culture, and loyalty been proved to be the true first-born of piety. I might bid you look at our West Indian possessions, and see the need there is for the sober devotion of the Church to dispel heathen gloom, and chasten sectarian fanaticism. I might point to India, with her millions of heathen, owning allegiance to the British crown. From the face of Australian destitution I dare not draw the veil—the sight is sad, and saddening. In New Zealand despair is indeed forbidden in the recollection of the self-devotion of its noble Bishop; and yet how vast is the plague-spot which it will be his to disinherit! North, south, east, and west, the cry is, “Come over, and help us;” and shall it be that Christian England, with her vast re-

sources, and her abundant light, shall turn to such a cry an ear of inattention? Forbid it, English honour!—forbid it, Christian sympathy! Our brethren in the faith have cast their lines in places pleasant to the eye of sense, but presenting no shelter from the dry and scorching blasts of sin, and their cry is, Stretch forth the curtains of thine habitation; they ask us to strengthen the stakes whereunto our tent is made fast. We are daily holding intercourse with the heathen, and their invitation is, “Enlarge the place of thy tent, and spare not; lengthen thy cords.” And *shall* we—*can* we resist the appeal?

And now ask you for channels through which you may make your gifts, in fulfilment of your missionary duty, alike at home and abroad? Churchmen will find two valuable handmaids of the Church ready and desirous to do her bidding in this particular—Societies which are as much the official organs of the Church, as, in the absence of credentials from Convocation, any can be. For home purposes, we have the Society for Promoting the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places,—while, in our colonies and heathen dependencies, the Church is aided by the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. These Societies are both composed entirely of churchmen, propose to themselves Church objects to be carried out on the principles of the Church, and are under the *ex-officio* government of the two Archbishops and all the Bishops in both provinces.

Of the Additional Curates' Society, I may say that it is, in the strictest sense, a machinery for disbursing, through the Bishops and Incumbents of the several dioceses, the funds placed at its disposal. This Society does not, in the person of a Committee of Presbyters, usurp the functions of the Episcopate—inquiring into the peculiar shade of the opinions held by those whom it enables Rectors and other Incumbents to employ. These are matters it leaves to the Rector and the Bishop. This Society seeks no tests from those who give, save that they are churchmen, seeking a blessing

through the Church's means ; and it confers no pay, save on those who possess the Church's seal, that they are her servants ; for it furnishes stipends only for those whom Incumbents nominate and Diocesans license—neither does it evade the spirit of this rule, by exercising a *quasi*-episcopal scrutiny previously to the nomination being made to the lawful authority. In this Society the whole appointment rests, where the laws of the Church and of the land place it, namely, in the Incumbent and the Bishop, and the Society merely furnishes the former with a stipend for his assistant, which becomes payable through the Incumbent, when the license of the Bishop is duly granted to the Curate.

“*Three hundred and sixty-three* Incumbents have *already* applied for aid through their respective Diocesans ; and of these, *one hundred and seven* are now enabled, by the help of the Society's annual grants, to establish *additional Services*, and to obtain *additional Curates* in their several parishes and districts, comprising an aggregate population of more than a million and three quarters. In addition to which a sum, remaining in the Society's hands, in consequence of grants not becoming payable, has been apportioned to *twenty-five* Parishes, in the shape of annual assistance to each for periods varying from one year to four years, when that sum will be exhausted.

“The Society's actual income is appropriated ; and for the means of extending relief to many and most urgent claims that press upon it, more in number, and, in many cases, equal in importance with the most pressing of those which have been relieved, the Committee look with confidence to a growing conviction in the public mind of the paramount importance of the object for which the Society is formed,—to the continued exertions of the Clergy to make that object more generally known in their respective neighbourhoods,—and to the increasing manifestation on the part of the *Laitie* of a readiness to imitate the piety and wisdom of their forefathers, to which the country

owes the foundation and endowment of so many of its churches.

“ The Society has also, with reference to the Seventh Rule agreed to at its formation, begun to make Grants in aid of Endowment, and has already contributed assistance to *Sixteen* Parishes.”

Of the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, it would be unnecessary to add a single word beyond a simple commendation of its Christ-like designs to your prayers and your alms, were it not that, at a meeting of the Parochial Branch of this Society, held in this town, towards the close of the last year, statements were made by the Rev. Secretary who formed the deputation, which have been generally received as avowing, on the part of the Society, a studious desire to exclude from its service a large and devoted body of the Clergy of the Church. Of the intention to call this meeting I had no intimation whatever, although, as a member of the Committee, I presume I had a right to be a party to any correspondence with the Parent Society which the local Secretary was empowered to conduct on the subject ; nor, indeed, when the meeting was arranged and called, had I any official notification of the fact ; nor was I cognizant of its public announcement, until my plans had been fully formed for leaving home for a few weeks. Consequently I was not present at the meeting, and could only learn from others what had taken place. When, on my return, I found the general impression, alike among those who rejoiced in and those who mourned at, the fact, to be, that the Society, comprising her former character for impartiality, had recognised the existence of parties within the Church, and condescended to legislate with reference to their conflicting interests, I felt it my duty, before renewing my exertions in behalf of the Society among my own flock, to ascertain whether the inference generally drawn from the Rev. Mr. Campbell’s speech was the correct one, and desired an answer to the following question, namely,—“ Whether it was true that the Society took ‘double and

anxious pains' to exclude all persons holding, what are vulgarly called, Oxford opinions from their service?" To this question I received from the Rev. Secretary himself the most decided negative.*

And I am now most thoroughly convinced that the Society occupies her old position, that she has in no wise come down from her high vantage ground of refusing to recognise parties within the Church; but that she was just what she ever was, the zealous and faithful handmaid of the whole Church, acknowledging no standards of scriptural interpretation but the accredited formularies of the Church, and refusing to interpose an inquisitorial Committee between the Bishops and those who are, under the Bishops, their authorized agents. Let it then be yours, brethren, to put forth renewed efforts in behalf of this Society, seeing that she still continues to act upon those broad, comprehensive, yet distinctive principles of the Church,

* In the Sermon itself, I read the exact passage from the letter which bore upon this point. I do not print either the entire letter or that passage, although I am empowered to show it to whomsoever I please, because it was never intended for the press. But I may take this opportunity of stating, that neither of the papers whose reporters, without communicating with me, attended to take notes of my Sermon, have given the extract quite correctly. One paper endeavours to represent Mr. C. as having said that the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel took pains to *choose* "Tractarians," whereas his statement does neither more nor less than purge the Society of the charge of party bias, either towards the one or the other of the sections into which the arch enemy of souls and of all truth is seeking to lure those to divide themselves, for whom the Saviour's earnest prayer, was that they should be one, as HE and the FATHER are ONE. And as some persons have wondered why I read only a part and not the whole of Mr. Campbell's letter, I can only say that it was because I did not choose to express in the pulpit that indignation which I felt, at one Clergyman asking, nor the surprise it caused me that another should answer, such a question as was therein related to have been put. While to those who think that none of the letter should have been read in the pulpit, but only its substance stated, I would suggest, that the peculiarity of my position here, and the extraordinary use that had been made of Mr. Campbell's original statement, appeared at the time to justify an exception to ordinary rules.

in her adherence to which, is our sole guarantee that we do right to join her.

And now, brethren, I commend this Fund* to your prayers and to your alms. The circular relating to it has been addressed to you individually, and contains a brief statement of the claims of Five Church Societies, together with an intimation of my readiness to receive any alms you might wish to bestow for the furtherance of the objects therein set forth. This circular was under consideration for some months before it was first issued, and every care has been taken to render it correct in matter and inoffensive in manner. It is put out at the present time, not so much with a view of the money being immediately collected, as that in making their plans for the present year, none of those committed to my charge might be unaware of some of the more urgent claims which the Church of England now makes upon her members. A reference to the circular will show that large gifts were not so much the object, as that, as a congregation, we should one and all, rich and poor alike, be doing something unitedly for the cause of the Gospel.

Let nothing be done of constraint; God loveth a cheerful giver, but let us not offer to the Lord our God that which doth cost us nothing; nay, can we day by day ask the Lord God "Thy kingdom come," and yet put forth no effort—practise no self-denial, to hasten, as far as we may be permitted to do it, the accomplishment of our wish? Let us, in our every thought and every action, prove that we do not wish to mock God when we say, "Thy kingdom come."

* I cannot forbear, in this place, tendering my thanks to my friend the Reverend R. Parkinson, B.D., Canon of Manchester, for the excellent Sermon on this subject he preached in St. John's last year, and which at my request he printed, under the title of "The Church of England, and Five of her Societies;" London: Rivingtons and Burns. Manchester: Sowler; price 6d.

NOTE.

" Whimsical Beneficence,"—See Sermon II. page 22.

EXCEPTION has been taken, I am informed, to this expression; and there have been those who have hence inferred a desire, on my part, to stipulate that all gifts of a charitable kind should pass through my hands. That this could not be my meaning, is very clear from page 13 of the former Sermon; and that I did not even wish to represent as essential the circumscribing the channels in which even gifts for purposes directly connected with the increased spiritual efficiency of the Church might be made, a reference to page 12 of the same Sermon will show. What I did mean, when I said that whimsical beneficence is not necessarily true christian charity, will be understood by those who know what it is to be imposed upon by a specious plea of temporal or spiritual necessity, which they had not the time or patience, at the moment, thoroughly to investigate, and to which they contribute to get rid of importunity.

The following passages, from a valuable Visitation Sermon on "Almsgiving, or the duties of the Rich," by the Rev. Folliott Baugh, are too appropriate to be omitted in this place.

"But, however this may be, there is one point of which we are all beginning to feel the deep importance. We are recognising now, let us hope not yet too late, the wisdom as well as the piety of our Church, in bidding us offer up our alms to God, and humbly dedicate them on his altar. This is the best method of restoring to our people's minds a sense of the sacredness of the duty, and of the blessing which we may expect from it. Let us teach them to look upon the OFFERTORY, not as a formal ceremony, a mere mockery of almsgiving, but as the appointed channel through which we may all, according to our means, administer effectual aid to the

necessities of CHRIST'S poor, and to the usefulness of his Church, and as one chief means by which we may ourselves 'lay hold on eternal life.'

"Even in the outward face of things there is much that should encourage us. Never, (it is not as a proud boast I say it,) never did the Clergy possess a stronger hold on the sympathy and respect of the upper and middle classes of this country. I know, indeed, that our political importance adds much to the respect in which we are held; that even those who are not themselves religious begin to appreciate the value of a Church in unquiet times, and to own that it is the best safeguard of property. But beyond such selfish views there is hidden a deep well-spring of Christian sentiment and principle, which would respond more than our timorous faith will venture to believe, to an earnest, systematic, consistent preaching of the great gospel duty of self-denying charity; but though bidden by a mightier than we, our hesitating hand dares not strike the rock, and therefore the water flows not. Let us have courage to make the effort; let us invite them by our Redeemer's gracious words, to such a measure of self-sacrifice as shall win His praise, and lay up for them a treasure in heaven. Let us remind them that the essence of charity is self-denial; that our almsgiving, unprofitable as all our service, yet as a duty, is an earnest and a solemn service; that our alms must not be lightly scattered as chance or good-nature prompts us, or be given as a matter of form or fashion, subscribed in some uniform sum to certain stated societies, because the world expects it of us, that if we view our substance in the light in which God views it, held in trust as by His stewards, we shall deliberately set apart out of our income, a fixed sum, a tenth, as it may be, or a fifth, as the portion of the poor and of the Church, and thank God if His grace enables us to do more than this, and give up some accustomed luxury or pleasure, to be repaid us, good measure, and running over, by HIM to whom we lend it."

APPENDIX.

THE FOLLOWING IS THE CIRCULAR REFERRED TO IN THE
DEDICATORY ADDRESS AND IN THE SERMON.

FUND IN AID OF FIVE CHURCH SOCIETIES,

And of the Sunday and Daily Schools

CONNECTED WITH

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM.

Treasurer.

EDWARD FRAMPTON, Esq., County of Gloucester Bank.

Secretaries.

Rev. ALEXANDER WATSON, M.A., 2 Priory-street,

Rev. FIELDING PALMER, M.A., 7, Grosvenor-street.

Collector.

Mr. W. B. HILL, 86, High-street.

THE Reverend ALEXANDER WATSON, wishing to enable every member of the congregation of St. John's Church to contribute according to their means to the support of the new Schools and of various Church purposes at home and abroad, begs to submit to you the accompanying plan for the formation of a Fund in aid of the Schools and of five Church Societies therein enumerated, in the hope that you may be inclined to further the objects contemplated in its organization, by becoming a Subscriber or Donor to its resources.

It is obvious that in this age of Societies some selection must be made from among the vast number which solicit our co-operation. When a Clergyman ventures to suggest such a selection to his flock, it is desirable that he should, as far as possible, act on general principles in which all Churchmen are agreed. Thus, it is admitted by all English Churchmen, that it is lawful to join societies which, seeking to carry forward the work of Christ's Gospel, are composed entirely of Church-

men, and are under the superintendence, *ex-officio*, of the Archbishops and all the Bishops of the two provinces of the Church of England. Here is a broad, comprehensive, and yet well-defined principle, concerning which there is no difference of opinion in the Church.

When, therefore, a Clergyman recommends only those Societies to which this condition applies, (as is done in the present case,) he is above the suspicion of party (except, indeed, the partizanship of being a Churchman,) and may reasonably expect the cooperation of his flock in assisting the funds of these Societies, however much or however little their opinions and his may agree concerning other associations, which some Churchmen may individually approve and support. And it is humbly suggested, that those who can only find it convenient to spare a small sum annually, will at least be acting *safely*, perhaps *wisely*, in supporting those operations which have the united sanction, and the collective prayers, of the *whole* of that particular Branch of the Church of which they are members.

The claims of each of these five Societies are very urgent at the present moment, and it is much to be regretted that those three which in the accompanying list are placed first (*viz.* the ADDITIONAL CURATES, the NATIONAL EDUCATION, and CHURCH BUILDING SOCIETIES,) do not receive that support to which they are so much entitled, and for which the pressing exigencies of the Church so loudly call. A heathen population is growing upon us by thousands, in the very midst of Christian England, and our manufacturing districts already invite missionary exertions. If Christian bounty will but multiply Clergy, Schools, and Churches,* in those neighbourhoods, the monsters of infidel creation will soon cease from the land, and Christian obedience and cheerful patriotism again make the English name a praise in the earth, inspiring awe abroad, and peace and joy at home.

Should a mode of contribution more free from the observation of men, and more accordant with a strict interpretation of St. Matt. vi. 1, 5, be preferred, your wish can be attained by your making your gifts on any occasion when the OFFERTORY is collected at St. John's, merely enclosing the gift in a paper, specifying the object to which you wish it to be devoted. And here it may be remarked that it is quite competent for any Subscriber or Donor to limit his or her contribution to certain definite objects, (instead of making it towards the general designs,) contemplated by the several Societies. For

* This order has been observed as seeming to be most in harmony with the manner in which the Gospel was first established in the world.

example: the Societies numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, will enable individuals to benefit the particular neighbourhood in which they were born, or from which they have derived their wealth or other comfort, whether temporal or spiritual: while through No. 5 they may aid the Colonial Bishoprics Fund, or any particular colony or dependency with which they are by any tie connected.

In commending this Fund to your approbation and support, a reference may be made to the following passages of God's Holy Word:—1 Cor. xvi. 2; St. Matt. v. 16; 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7; Gal. vi. 10; 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19; St. John x. 16; Isaiah xxxii. 20, and as "*Freely ye have received, freely give,*" knowing that "HE THAT WATERETH SHALL BE WATERED ALSO HIMSELF."

OBJECTS OF THE FUND.

THE support of the **Sunday and Daily Schools** for Educating the Children of the Poor who attend **St. John's Church**:

And of the following five Societies, which, combined, present in one view all the leading objects of Church Associations; they are composed entirely of Churchmen, and are under the superintendence, *ex-officio*, of the Archbishops, and all the Bishops of the two Provinces of the Church of England; they are supported by the Clergy, and approved by all, who, recognising the Church as the Divinely appointed channel through which heavenly blessings are conveyed to mankind, think that the great purposes for which she was instituted may be furthered by the agency of subordinate associations.

It is hoped that, through the instrumentality of this Fund, a systematic and well defined direction may be given to various irregular and unconnected operations of religious charity, and still more that many may now be induced to contribute for the first time to the relief of the pressing wants of the Church, on seeing the simplicity, harmony, and regularity of the methods by which their gifts will be administered.

If it is asked, why other Societies are not included within the operation of this Fund, it may be a sufficient answer to the question to refer the inquirer to the preceding remarks; and, that the views therein maintained are not singular, may be seen by reference to the Charge delivered by the BISHOP of LONDON to his Clergy at the Visitation in October, 1838, in which the following passage occurs, "I MENTION THESE SOCIETIES MORE PARTICULARLY AS BEING FRAMED IN STRICT ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY, AND AS BEING UNDER THE DIRECT AND EFFECTIVE SUPERINTENDENCE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH." This Bishop and others have since that period joined another Missionary Society, but as the alterations in the rules of that Society do not go the length of including all the Archbishops and Bishops of the two Provinces as *ex officio* guardians of its interests, it does not come within the terms of a Society concerning the constitution, of which "there is no difference of opinion in the Church," and is therefore omitted from the following list:

1. The Society for Promoting the Employment of Additional Curates in Populous Places, instituted, A.D. 1836; Patron, the Queen;

which provides Rectors and other Incumbents with funds for multiplying the number of those duly commissioned CLERGY to whom our LORD has entrusted the seeking of HIS "sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for HIS children, which are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through CHRIST for ever."

2. The National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church throughout England and Wales, established, A.D. 1811, incorporated, A.D. 1817;

which provides the Clergy with Schools and competent Teachers, and so enables them to "feed the lambs" of the fold, and to "train up" their People from infancy "in the nurture and admonition of the LORD."

3. The Society for Promoting the Enlargement, Building, and Repairing of Churches and Chapels, established, A.D. 1818, incorporated, A.D. 1828; Patron, the Queen:

which holds out inducement and cooperation to Clergy and People to erect "temples of the LORD, habitations for the mighty God" of Christians, which shall be "Houses of Prayer for all People."

4. The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, incorporated, A.D. 1698;

which supplies Churches, Schools, Parish Libraries, and the Poor, *both at home and abroad*, with Bibles, Prayer Books, Testaments, Psalters, and Books and Tracts of Instruction and Amusement, at prices considerably below prime cost, *making gratuitous grants where necessary*.

5. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, incorporated by Royal Charter, A.D. 1701;

which provides the Bishops with funds to plant branches of the Church of CHRIST in our Colonial and other Dependencies, and *among the distant heathen*, having taken for its guidance the rule laid down by our LORD, in Luke xxiv. 47, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in HIS name among all nations, *beginning at Jerusalem*:" the home of their labours, and the first Metropolitan See.

NAME AND ADDRESS.	ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS.							DONATIONS.	
	Unrestricted.	St. John's Schools.	Add. Curates	Nat. Soc.	Ch. Bdg.	S. P. C. K.	S. P. G. F. P.	£	s. d.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	1 £ s. d.	2 £ s. d.	3 £ s. d.	4 £ s. d.	5 £ s. d.		

N.B. This mark (+) in any column indicates that the Member so marked is already a Subscriber to that Society elsewhere.

The column headed "unrestricted" will contain Subscriptions intended for the five Societies generally. (*See p. 41.*) The five columns, numbered to correspond with the foregoing Societies, will contain such as are intended for those Societies respectively and specifically; and G. & B. D. in column 3 will denote that the sum indicated there is intended for the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Church Building Association.

The last column affords an opportunity to such as may desire to testify by a Donation their sanction and encouragement to this Fund, without the necessity of commencing a new yearly Subscription.

The amounts collected under 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, will be paid over annually to the Parent Societies in London, (EXCEPT IN THE CASES WHERE THERE MAY BE ALREADY BRANCHES IN CHELTENHAM, WHEN IT WILL BE PAID THROUGH THEM,) in the names of the several Subscribers and Donors, thus securing to them the privileges attaching to membership with the Parent Society in each instance.

The amounts collected under the first and last column will be divided among the five equally, or in such other proportion as particular exigencies may suggest.

All Subscriptions will be considered due on the First of January in each year. And it is particularly hoped that those who can afford to give *more than* ONE GUINEA to the several objects, will do so: it is as particularly wished that those who can only give less, will not be deterred from giving at all, because they are unable to reach this sum. Let the rich provoke the less wealthy to give smaller sums, by themselves giving largely: and the less wealthy incite the rich to do nobly, by themselves doing what they can: there is no higher praise in the Gospel than "SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD!"

EDWARD FRAMPTON, Esq., County of Gloucester Bank, has kindly consented to act as Treasurer to the Fund, by whom Subscribers' Names, as well as Subscriptions and Donations, will be received; as also by the Reverend ALEXANDER WATSON, M.A., 2, Priory-street; the Reverend FIELDING PALMER, M.A., 7, Exeter-place, Grosvenor-street; or by Mr. W. B. HILL, Agent for St. John's Church, 86, High-street.

* * * Information connected with the operations of the various Societies will be periodically communicated to the Subscribers.

NOTE.

A REFERENCE to the preceding pages will show that, so far from there being any desire to interfere with the Parochial Branches by the formation of this Fund, what is obtained by its means is paid through the Parochial Treasurers. In fact, by forming this fund, I have only acted upon the assertion I find in the Report of the Cheltenham District Committee, read by the Reverend Secretary, at the meeting 19th Nov. 1840, namely, "Without the continued, nay, without the increasing support of *local congregations*, the operations of the Parent Society cannot be carried on upon that extended scale which the urgency of the case demands." Not having parochial charge, I could not form a District Fund, but I could and have formed a Congregational Fund,—and with what success, the Report of the current year will prove.







